DOCUMENT RESUME

ED 421 477 SP 038 050

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TITLE The Changing Nature of Professional Development Programs for Teachers: The University of Minnesota Experience.

PUB DATE 1998-06-00

NOTE 12p.; Paper presented at the Japan-United States Teacher Education Consortium (JUSTEC) Conference (Kyoto, Japan, June 24-28, 1998).

PUB TYPE Reports - Descriptive (141) -- Speeches/Meeting Papers (150)

EDRS PRICE MF01/PC01 Plus Postage.

DESCRIPTORS Educational Change; Elementary Secondary Education; *Faculty Development; Governance; Higher Education; *Inservice Teacher Education; Leadership Training; Participative Decision Making; Program Development; *Teacher Improvement

IDENTIFIERS University of Minnesota

ABSTRACT

This paper discusses how the University of Minnesota's College of Education and Human Development (CEHD) is meeting challenges related to the changing nature of professional development programs, focusing on programs featuring a system of shared decision making on matters of design and governance of program elements. After a commentary about CEHD and its goals, the paper describes the many programs intended for inservice populations of students. The balance of the paper offers comments about the two basic kinds of masters programs at CEHD. Traditional programs are controlled by CEHD faculty who decide what the course requirements will be and how the program will be governed. Innovative programs are controlled by faculty, students, and school districts, who make shared decisions about courses and governance. Two successful innovative programs with differing delivery and governance systems are examined. The Teacher Leadership Program is offered jointly by two CEHD departments. This program builds leadership skills and facilitates analysis of school culture, policies, research, and practice. The program has a reflective focus on leadership. The other program, Improving Practice Through Applied Classroom Training, is a collaboration between CEHD, a school district, and five participating school district members. This program helps enable participants to transfer knowledge into classroom reality successfully. (Contains 13 references.) (SM)

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The Changing Nature of Professional Development Programs for Teachers: The University of Minnesota Experience

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Delivered at the JUSTEC Conference
"Supporting Parents and Teachers:
Proposals for Renewing Education
from Japan and the USA"

Bukkyo University, Kyoto, Japan
June 24-28, 1998

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C. Hopkins

Abstract

Schools in the United States have always been subjected to criticism and controversy, a situation often resulting in attempts at reform. While previous movements emphasized the need for schools to broaden their efforts, the current reform movement centers on issues of quality. Numerous themes have been developed to challenge schools to change to improve quality, and most of the new challenges call for substantial changes in the roles of teachers. Teachers will increasingly assume responsibility for leadership in school reform and for involvement in decision making on school issues. This situation has many implications for education schools at major universities because they now face the problem of building programs that help inservice teachers become executive professionals. This paper discusses how one education school, the College of Education and Human Development at the University of Minnesota is meeting these challenges. Particular attention is given to programs featuring a system of shared decision making on matters of design and governance of program elements.

Reform Movements in American Education

Schools in the United States have always been the subject of great controversy and conflict and the object of a large number of reform movements. The most usual comments made by the reformers have centered on the narrowness of the educational system---that is, the schools did not enroll enough people or they did not treat all people alike. Poor children, females, members of several minority groups, mentally and physically handicapped children, and pupils who did not plan to attend college were the groups identified most often as being educated poorly by schools or omitted from them.

The response from schools was most typically to find ways to include more pupils by broadening the curriculum and changing enrollment standards. School and community leaders encouraged legislatures to require school attendance for all children. Schools for girls were established, and later they were included in the same classes with boys. Opportunities for black and other minority pupils were increased, although the efforts to do so were often met with anger and a lack of success. Children with mental and physical challenges began to find schools more hospitable as programs with special features were initiated. Schooling became popular beyond the primary grades as high schools were developed to include all adolescents. Today the vast majority of high school age pupils are enrolled, and about 95 percent of them graduate. The financing of schools also received attention, and the burden of sending children to school shifted from the family to the society as state and local tax money was used in support of schools.

Currently, most educational observers contend that yet another reform movement is underway. This one is alleged to have begun in 1983 with the publication of A Nation at Risk, which contained a strong critical statement about schools' "health" and a set of "get well" recommendations. The Risk report was significant for an number of reasons: While its major contentions were not substantiated, Risk nonetheless won the support of important decision makers. Also it did not seek to broaden the scope of the educational system; rather it emphasized the need to improve the accomplishments of its graduates. The concern was quality, an emphasis that now occupies center stage of the reform effort.

Risk was followed by a bevy of other reports by committees appointed by national professional organizations and educational foundations, all of which commented on the prevailing quality agenda. These reports have adopted what could be called major themes for the reform movement calling for strengthening schools by adopting new strategies and techniques. Following are the reforms now recommended:

- Technology---The claim made in this theme is that technology (especially the use of computers) can revolutionize education.
- School Organization---More responsive organization is needed and decentralization of decision making is the key. Schools need to be managed by those who do the work locally, so "site based" management is necessary.
- Curriculum Improvement---International studies continue to show the US to be low in achievement compared with other developed countries, so new curriculum materials and strategies must be employed, particularly in mathematics and science.
- Linkages with the Family---Families are the most important variable in improving pupil performance, so schools and parents should find ways to cooperate.
- Linkages with Business and Industry---Pupils need to be prepared for work, so schools and businesses should form partnerships.

Admittedly, these themes have built-in contradictions and difficulties that tend to inhibit making systemic changes in the schooling process. But at the very least, the themes provide an outline of the current reform process and an agenda that most Americans understand and appreciate. Unfortunately, the current reform movement has not been successful in addressing the main criticisms and stilling complaints about schools. After more than a decade and one half, the cries of bad performance are as loud as ever, and schools still face low public esteem and confidence and the suspicion that better performance should be possible.

Why is this so? How can so much time and effort be expended over a relatively long period of time without conclusive results? The proposals for improving schools are rich in creativity and contain a large number of attractive features, but they have not been successful. In our judgment the most likely reason is the fact that an important (perhaps the most important) element in educational reform has been largely ignored. Reformers obviously realize that schools cannot improve unless sufficient quantities of good teachers are recruited, educated, inducted into the teaching profession and retained in teaching for a long time. But while the need to enroll teachers in reform efforts is recognized and applauded, the reports contain few illustrations showing the ways that improved teaching can be accomplished. Thankfully, most reformers have not fallen victim to the temptation of creating "teacher proof" materials, but neither have they recognized the need for revitalized programs to equip teachers with a wider array of skills.

Thus, the current educational climate in the US seems to demand strong measures to help teachers improve. Much of this climate is created by state departments of education, many of which now encourage a number of critical changes in the ways schools are governed and organized, requiring school based management and decision making to be done by teachers and parents as well as school administrators, school board members and/or state officials. Some states have also required educational renewal strategies calling for new goals and objectives, new and more challenging tests, curriculum changes, restructuring of a host of in-school activities---generally there is a loud call for the standards of schooling to be raised. The proposed changes would (certainly) alter the delivery of educational experiences and (hopefully) the performance of pupils as well.

The success of reforms such as these depends on the development of teachers who would be *educational leaders* as well as excellent *classroom performers*. Teachers are now expected to take on expanded roles in and out of the classroom. Most importantly, they are being viewed not as instruments for delivering a curriculum produced outside the school, but as active participants in the design of the total educational experience for pupils. As such, they are being asked to chair committees, cooperate in determining school policies, work on developing curricula, and assume new roles with colleagues, pupils and parents. In short, a fair share of the governance, design and control of schools is to be handled by teachers.

How are teachers to be prepared for these new roles? Are current training programs sufficient to the task? While we have little sympathy and no respect for the teacher education bashing that is such a prominent part of the US educational scene, we must note that teacher preparation programs at either the undergraduate or graduate levels do not and cannot fully prepare teachers to take on these expanded roles. The roles are simply too vast and complicated for the time available to prospective teachers and the resources held by the education schools. The inadequacies of preparation programs need to be addressed by creative and active inservice experiences for teachers after they have demonstrated successful classroom performance.

These necessary new approaches create an interesting challenge for teacher training institutions. They must develop programs for teachers who have not been part of the college's program in the

past, experiment with unfamiliar ways of teaching and evaluating students, and find ways to encourage their faculty to serve teachers through higher education. Such demands create conflicts as they compete with more traditional (and perhaps less contentious) goals and activities.

This paper provides some insights into the way one educational institution---the College of Education and Human Development (CEHD) at the University of Minnesota (UMN)---has managed the conflicts and tensions inherent in the process of identifying "inservice" groups of teachers for special treatment and designing new programs for these groups. The discussion begins with commentary about CEHD and its goals; followed by descriptions of the many programs intended for inservice populations of students; an analysis of two successful programs with differing delivery and governance systems; and finally, some concluding comments.

Context---The University of Minnesota and the State

The development of new courses and curricula in higher education is affected by a university's location and the goals its society expects to accomplish. UMN is the largest and certainly the most significant university in Minnesota. The main campuses of UMN are in the Twin Cities of Minneapolis and St. Paul, and the majority of students in the system are enrolled there. In addition, UMN has four-year campuses in the outstate cities of Duluth, Morris, and Crookston. These campuses are not included in the programs discussed in this paper.

UMN in the Twin Cities has a full complement of academic units, one of which is CEHD. The College was founded in 1905 as a department of pedagogy in the liberal arts college. It has become one of the oldest and most highly regarded education schools in the US, enrolling more than 3,000 students with a faculty of 114 tenure track professors. About 950 degrees are awarded each year, with the largest number (540) in master of education degrees. About 275 students each year complete postbaccalaureate programs in teacher licensure, and 170 undergraduates earn BS or BA degrees in a variety of fields. The budget of UMN is approximately 35 million dollars, obtained from tuition receipts (15 million), from State allocation (8 million) and from outside funding (12 million).

CEHD maintains a wide array of programs in research and teaching. Key initiatives include several efforts to encourage minority enrollment, a determined attempt to develop international experiences for the students, and a desire to connect college activities with the needs of the schools. The College also supports 18 research centers and institutes to promote research and development in a wide range of areas.

At its beginning, CEHD's main purpose was to prepare teachers for the schools of Minnesota. Over the years however, the emphasis has changed. Six state universities that operate under a different administration than UMN have increased in size and expanded in mission. These schools, originally teacher education colleges, now have large and growing teacher education populations and have become the primary institutions for teacher education, allowing UMN to strengthen its graduate programs and research agenda. Undergraduate teacher education programs at UMN have been replaced by fifth year programs which require a bachelors degree for entry. Graduate programs have increased in size and in number, achieving high status in the process, and the college's research agenda has increased markedly in importance.

The result is a professional school focusing its programs on a wide variety of students---undergraduates in kinesiology and child development, masters students in preservice teacher education programs, masters and doctoral students preparing for college teaching or school

administration, and inservice teachers enrolled in master of education programs designed to provide the knowledge and skills they need for their new roles.

Preparing programs for students across such a broad spectrum demands that college faculty consider new factors. Traditional college programs are developed "in house"---that is, the faculty is in control of curriculum design, course content and program governance. While contacts may be made with groups of students when new programs are built or old ones revised, there is little doubt that the college faculty is in complete control of design and governance. But the new roles to be played by teachers are so varied and complex that to many people, it would seem impossible to determine the entire content by the conventional method and to limit control to the faculty. Moreover, school districts often express the desire not only to cooperate with CEHD but to play a significant role in determining the content of the program received by their teachers. Thus, it follows that teachers must be involved in thinking through what they want from the program and how it could best be delivered to them.

The balance of this paper consists of comments about the two basic kinds of masters programs at CEHD. One we classify as "traditional"; programs that are clearly controlled by CEHD faculty who decide what the course requirements will be and how the program will be governed. The second can be classified as "innovative" programs in which the faculty shares responsibility with students and school districts for making significant decisions about courses and governance.

Traditional Programs

As noted earlier, CEHD offers a set of graduate degrees at both the masters and doctoral levels. Some of these programs are intended to increase the skills of classroom teachers by providing them with specialized course work related to their teaching positions. Thus, primary school teachers complete a 45 quarter hour masters program including courses in the teaching of reading, mathematics, social studies, language arts, science, and children's literature; in addition, courses in learning psychology, curriculum, and instructional systems are required Secondary school teachers' programs include specialty work in their field and courses in the foundation areas. At both levels, students must complete a paper on a research topic or a curriculum problem that confronts them in their school district.

Until the last decade or so, these were the only CEHD degree programs aimed at meeting the needs of inservice teachers. As teacher roles became more complex, with less concentration on the classroom dimension, graduate enrollment in CEHD began to fall. The CEHD programs remained relevant for their original purposes, but increasingly, teachers called for university help with the new problems they faced. Teachers were expected to be leaders in their districts, but the skills needed in these roles were not taught in their teacher education programs. It became clear that another set of postbaccalaurate degrees was required.

Innovative Programs

While CEHD has continued to offer its traditional content-centered teacher education programs, a number of innovative programs leading to Master of Education degrees have been created to meet the new demands facing teachers. Two of these, the Teacher Leadership program (TLP) and the Improving Practice Through Applied Classroom Teaching (IMPACT) program were selected for discussion in this paper. These two customized alternative degree programs offer students theory and practice as do traditional programs, but they are tailored to meet the requirements of specific

groups of students or consortiums of schools as well as the generic needs of the teaching profession.

Both programs are:

- offered jointly by two departments within the College (TLP by the Departments of Curriculum and Instruction and Educational Policy and Administration; IMPACT by the Departments of Educational Psychology and Curriculum and Instruction);
- continuous improvement models (while there is a core curriculum, elective curriculum content and experience content changes each year);
- student-centered rather than faculty-centered (students are active and vocal decision makers);
- school site focused (many courses are offered at school district sites and activities are practical applications of theory and instruction to existing school district problems/issues);
- on-going professional development models (rather than one-shot workshops and short courses without reinforcement);
- capstone integrative project (rather than major paper course work culmination focus);
- 35-member cohort models (ongoing support from peer colleagues and college faculty; members from the same school/school districts are encouraged to enroll together);
- participant and advisor/mentor/coach relationship (each student has a university faculty adviser, a school site mentor and district wide staff development coach).

The Teacher Leadership Program (TLP)---The TLP builds leadership skills and facilitates analysis of school culture, policies, research, and practice. It is a 45 quarter hour program completed in two to three years emphasizing three content areas: leadership, educational issues, and practice, including both teaching skills and curriculum. Specific areas of study include collaboration, group dynamics and shared decision making, school policy, innovations in teaching, future educational systems, multicultural education and technology. As noted earlier, because of its broad nature, the program is jointly offered by two CEHD departments. It was implemented in 1991 after receiving support from all six College departments.

Participants create and present a leadership project designed to initiate and/or promote change within the field of education. Project design and development are fostered through the practical research component.

There is a reflective focus on leadership in the TLP. This is not curricular leadership as typically defined nor is it discipline specific. The intent of the program is to enable teachers to assume leadership responsibility at the classroom, building and district levels. It is a collaborative planning and decision making model which fits into the site-based Minnesota model, which mandates management of budget, curriculum and personnel at the local school level by teams of educators, parents, and students as age appropriate.

Three measures have been used to gauge the program's success: graduation rate, student self assessment survey responses, and program replication. The 1998-99 cohort is the seventh group involved in the program. Two hundred fifty-nine students enrolled from 1991-1997, the first five cohort groups. Of these, 197 or approximately 75% have graduated within the two-three year goal, a rate considerably higher than other part-time student programs.

The second measure of program success comes from yearly surveys seeking student comments. The most recent survey of students from the last two cohorts show that TLP teacher leaders are early to mid-career professions who:

- like their jobs, except for a lack of feedback about how they are doing;
- want to stay in teaching and hold leadership positions in their schools;
- believe their teacher leadership activities to be their most important professional development resource; and
- believe that their TLP degree will improve their credibility, leadership, and effectiveness and enable them to have more influence on school issues.

One of the comments made by a participant reflects a general view of the TLP students: "The professors and the TLP courses stimulate you to move to the next level. You learn to be a self-directed and conscientious learner. Since I started this degree, I have become more critical and raised more questions about change. I have a broader knowledge base about what will affect schools---I know the history of the innovations and I can respond by making informed decisions."

Finally, a third measure of program success is the replication of the conceptual framework of TLP. Originally, the TLP was envisioned to be a metropolitan teachers program. It has since expanded to sites outstate as well as to American schools in the Middle East. Additionally, the program has been imitated by the state university and private college systems.

What remains to be determined through additional study, however, is whether participants/graduates of the TLP work more interdependently with school administrators in implementing change to bring about improved teaching and learning than those teachers who have not participated.

Improving Practice Through Applied Classroom Training (IMPACT)---IMPACT is a collaboration between CEHD, the St. Croix River Education District (SCRED), and five participating SCRED school district members. It is a locally conceived academic degree and professional development program created to design relevant and productive staff development opportunities which are on-going, mentor-supported experiences involving both theory and application. Its goal is to enable participants to transfer knowledge into classroom reality successfully. Participants must have the approval of their home school district, SCRED, and CEHD. Each participating school district has a limited number of reserved places for its staff. Participants who are degree seeking have seven years in which to complete their degree.

Offered by the College's Departments of Curriculum and Instruction and Educational Psychology, it is a Master of Education degree program serving pre-kindergarten through grade 12 teachers and related service personnel. In addition, it provides CEHD faculty with opportunities to work directly and continuously in schools.

The 45 credit practitioner-based program was designed specifically for approximately 35 educators in five school districts who want to improve their instruction, decision-making, and evaluation skills. The decisions of which core and elective courses and activities to include were made by SCRED in conjunction with CEHD.

The focus is on seven major components, five of which are "core" areas required of all students:

1. curriculum and instruction
2. assessment
3. literacy

4. teaching diverse learners
5. classroom management
6. electives (e.g., early childhood, English education, instructional systems and technology, mathematics, science, second languages and cultures, social studies, special education)
7. school based project

The program is based upon a set of instructional competencies which were derived from the Interstate New Teacher Assessment and Support Consortium (INTASC) performance-based standards for licensing teaching with the addition of a research component. The INTASC standards currently are used by the Minnesota Board of Teaching as the basis for teacher preparation and assessment of effective practice. These learner outcomes are used to:

- determine content and curriculum for courses in IMPACT
- design practicum components for each course, and
- develop a measurement system to monitor whether outcomes are being demonstrated in the classroom.

The INTASC goals focus on:

- instructional strategies
- learning environment
- subject matter
- student learning
- diverse learners
- communication
- planning instruction
- assessment
- reflection and professional development
- collaboration, ethics, and relationships
- research

To accommodate the schedules of participants, the required coursework is offered at school sites in a special format that includes academic year long classes. Students are placed in thematic teams which allow them to work in collaboration on issues of personal and professional interest. The IMPACT program's implementation success is dependent upon a staff development coordinator, institutional resource lending library, and technology (e.g., electronic mail, interactive television, and course Web pages).

An initiative of the state of Minnesota is that of graduation standards which require student demonstration of achievement. SCRED districts and the College designed the IMPACT program as a staff development program which parallels Minnesota graduation standards by providing opportunity for teachers and related staff to obtain a graduate degree, credits for licensure renewal, and/or accumulate credits to make lane changes on their home districts' master contract for teachers. Additionally, IMPACT is viewed as an organizational framework for supporting and directing the development of new teachers.

The overall goal of the comprehensive teacher coaching component is to provide a mechanism for exemplary teachers to model examples of best practices in each of the five core areas identified earlier and to serve as teacher coaches to the students enrolled in IMPACT. Additionally, each

teacher will be formally observed at least five times per year. Observers will look for variables chosen from the literature as indicators of "healthy classrooms."

The three measures used by CEHD to gauge the Teacher Leadership Program's success have not been applied in the IMPACT Program's evaluation because IMPACT is only a year old. However, student self assessment survey responses include the following comments

- "Applying what we have learned as a cohort is proving to be very useful within my classroom."
- "The faculty instructors have incorporated the requirements of the Minnesota Graduation Rule into our assessment project. I am required to do for my coursework what is required by my school district. It makes sense."
- "This program provides me with an opportunity to discuss and plan teaching strategies with my colleagues while learning from knowledgeable faculty members. What I am learning is geared toward my area of instruction."

One final measurement reported by the SCRED IMPACT Project Director is the use of a local measurement initiative that was implemented to provide feedback and instructional consultation to teachers on the critical indicators of effective teaching. While results are not available at this time, data from this measure will provide an assessment of the effectiveness of the IMPACT Master's Degree Program.

Conclusion

Current recommendations for educational reform in the US indicate that teachers must as always be good in the classroom but now must be involved in a wide range of activities for which they have not been prepared. Education schools---the institutions responsible for training---must develop programs for inservice teachers to help them learn the skills necessary to a changing system.

This paper has as its main purpose the discussion of two programs developed in the CEHD at the University of Minnesota. Both the TLP and IMPACT programs are collaborative models which have been designed to meet needs of teacher students which cannot be met by existing traditional College programs. Additionally, they have been created in response to statewide Minnesota mandates. The programs are outreach initiatives of the College designed to be more accessible to practicing professionals.

These innovative programs faced some inherent difficulties. Because they involve more than one department, unusual problems must be solved. How are costs to be apportioned? How can resources be allocated equitably? Governance issues are also prominent. Who is in charge? How can issues of governance be shared between departments? How can governance be shared with enrolled teachers and their school districts? Deciding how to address these questions meant many meetings, some arguments, and a great deal of hard work. With considerable effort faculty found ways to successfully resolve major issues.

Have the innovative programs been effective? While this question cannot be answered completely as yet, feedback to date indicates that the programs have had several positive effects. The surveys in the TLP indicate that students like the program and believe that it has benefited them. Teacher comments about the IMPACT show that the students think the program has been

useful to them. All students appear to like the shared decision making that differentiates the innovative from traditional programs. And there has been no rebellion from CEHD faculty over the shared nature of these ventures.

On the whole, the innovations seem to have several elements of success. The TLP continues to be attractive to students, and, while it is too early to tell for certain, IMPACT shows signs of demand from school districts that have plans to upgrade their teachers.

If these and other innovations are to continue, CEHD must attend to several issues. How can faculty be rewarded for their planning and cooperative work in alternative programs with the limited resources available? How does this assignment fit into promotion and tenure requirements? What support can be obtained from central administration to meet the challenges inherent in alternative programs? In conclusion, it appears that the benefits of TLP and IMPACT to both teacher/students in helping them to fulfill their teacher/leader roles and to CEHD faculty in their new inservice educator roles far outweigh the "inconveniences" of the needed policy changes at the university level.

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